

**Convention and Tourism Advisory Committee**  
**Tuesday, November 7, 2006 – Minutes**

**Members Present:** Ben Vidricksen, Bette Timmel, Gerald Cook, Kathy Tolbert, Abner Perney,

**Members Absent:** Tricia Weems, Jennifer Sturges, Rosie Leek

**Guests/Staff Present:** Mike Harmon– BW Mid America Inn; Sylvia Rice, Tiffany Benien, Jo Ann McClure– Chamber Staff

**Minutes**

The Minutes of the October 2006 meeting were reviewed.

**Financial Statement**

The September Financial Statement was reviewed.

**Division Updates:**

**Sports Market**

Tiffany reported on the following:

- **TEAMS Conference** – Tiffany attended the TEAMS conference in Las Vegas October 11-15. The conference had 1200 attendees. In addition to attending educational sessions and networking, Tiffany represented the Play Kansas coalition at a booth at the conference trade show. More than 200 other booths were on site including coalitions, states, cities and hotel chains. During the trade show Tiffany had scheduled appointments with the following sports associations; *World Karting Association, USSSA Sports, World Juggling Federation, Soccer Resort, National Amateur Dodgeball, Generations Bowling Tour, NCAA, Lacrosse, American Junior Golf, ASA of America, Fancy Footwork Productions, American Darts Association, Bear Foot Sports, US Bobsled & Skeleton Federation, USA Rugby and the National Association of Police Athletics/Activities Leagues*. The size of the event, bid fees, dates and facilities are the primary factors that lead to actually booking a sports event. However, in addition to those factors, most associations want to see local involvement either through local clubs or leagues. Volunteers and local supporters are key to hosting a successful event, which is much of the reason why Salina is successful in hosting basketball, baseball, softball and most High School events. Tiffany will be looking at the potential of hosting new events, and is encouraged by the new opportunities Salina has specifically with soccer and other sports.
- **3A/4A Volleyball** – The KSHSAA State 3A/4A Volleyball Championships were played at the Bicentennial Center October 27-28. More than 5,500 were in attendance, which is the best attendance in 5 years. The event has been in Salina since 1989.
- **KSHSAA Football** – Tiffany reminded everyone that the KSHSAA State Football Championship would be held on Saturday, November 25 at Salina Stadium. A few volunteers are still needed, although recruitment has went well the past few weeks.

**Tourism Market**

Sylvia gave the following reports:

Tourism Market:

- **Kansas Tourism Conference** – Sylvia and Jo Ann attended the Kansas Tourism Conference in Dodge City October 8-11. Sylvia reported it was a great conference, with top-notch speakers, including Bill Geist. (Zeitgeist); Judy Randall (Randall Travel Marketing); National Geographic photographer Jim Richardson; Cathy Kruzic (Kruzic Communications) and several others. KTI (Kansas Tourism Initiative) was introduced to the delegates by Sen. Nick Jordan and Cathy Kruzic. This initiative is being modeled after the highly successful Bio-Science initiative of a few years ago. The goal is to have a strategic plan to take to the 2008 legislature. Next year's conference is scheduled for Sept. 30-Oct. 3 in Topeka, and will celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of TIAK.
- Sylvia was elected 2007 President of TIAK during the conference. She will participate in the TIAK Executive Committee Retreat in Cottonwood Falls, November 9. Agenda items include consideration of the TIAK management contract, creating the 2007 Business Plan, and meeting with the membership committee.
- Sylvia collaborated with Kim Legleiter of the Stauth Museum to present "How to Work With Your CVB (DMO)" during the Kansas Museums Association conference in Hays last week. While there, she also presented a quick overview of the KTI during a luncheon.

#### Advertising:

- Sylvia presented an outline of the Kansas Travel & Tourism advertising opportunities that Salina plans to participate in, including the TV campaign with corresponding newspaper placements in Des Moines, Omaha, OKC and KC. Other print ads will appear in Midwest Living, and AAA magazines. Of course, other ads will be placed throughout the year in addition. She has also discussed a direct mail co-op with Kathy Tolbert, RHWA.

#### Group Market:

- Sylvia just returned from the NTA (National Tour Association) Convention and Marketplace in Salt Lake City. She held appointments with several group planners, emphasizing Salina's location, attractors, and lodging options. A few regional planners indicated interest in visiting during the 2007 Smoky Hill River Festival in consideration of the "Sunday in the Park" itinerary she introduced. The Tour Kansas booth drew great interest, as people plan to attend 2007 NTA in Kansas City. The 7-member Kansas delegation was small in number – but very visible – particularly at the Ice Breaker event where their yellow shirts promoted the "There's No Place Like Kansas – A Legendary Night" event that will be hosted during NTA 2007 at the Village West complex in KCK.
- Sylvia will also attend the ABA (American Bus Association) marketplace in February, and the Bank Travel marketplace in March. Cooperative print ads will be placed through Tour Kansas (KMMA) in 2007, including the Group Travel Leader publications (Going on Faith, Bank Travel, Travel Bound and Group Travel Leader) and Destinations and Courier, the official publications of NTA and ABA.

#### Statistics:

Sylvia reported that the conversion study has experienced nearly an 8% return rate. The data is being compiled from the returned cards. More than 1000 cards were sent this first stage, to people that requested tourist packets, and to a cross-section of reader responses to print ads in the first six months of 2006.

A few of the hotels have responded to the market segmentation survey, and more are expected to. Once the surveys come in, we'll meet with properties for more in depth discussions.

The STR (Smith Travel Report) shows a slight increase across the board for Saline County in September, and also in our YTD figures. TGT receipts are up approximately 12% YTD.

#### Convention Market

Jo Ann gave the following convention market update:

- Jo Ann announced that we successfully hosted the annual KDOT Winter Maintenance Expo (Sept. 6-7) and the Wheatland Cluster Dog Show (Sept. 15-17) at the Salina Bicentennial Center.
- The UAV (unmanned aerial vehicles) Future Systems Symposium will be October 5-6. They will be using the airport and the bombing range for recon mission training and showcasing. There are also non-military uses for these vehicles. Attendance for Friday should be 200. International press is attending the event. The symposium is a joint venture with the Salina Airport Authority and the Kansas National Guard and there is the possibility of future industrial projects stemming from this event. The aircraft on display and test flying is civilian built.
- NAPUS (National Association of Postmasters-Kansas) will be here for their second year in a row. We have a bid out for them for 2007.
- The Kansas/Nebraska Southern Baptist convention will be here October 15-16.
- We hosted the Plant Facilities Directors September 24-26 who were back for their second time in a row.
- The Kansas State Housing Conference of approximately 200 people will be here for the first time October 11-13. Part of their event includes a tour of Salina where they will be taking buses to Presidents Place and some of the downtown loft homes.
- The PMS military reunion returns to the Mid America Inn, and will be visiting the Smoky Hill Bison Co. and touring the Underground Salt Mines in Hutchinson.

#### Committee Discussion:

The group discussed the changing face of tourism – hotels going up across the state, how travelers are making their travel decisions.

Commissioner Perney discussed the needs of SCCA and other race events.

Betty Timmel gave a spectator's report on the Garrison Keillor appearance at Bethany College.

Ben Vidricksen said that the Scout Museum project is on hold, waiting for a hearing about the flood plain issues.

Kathy Tolbert announced the opening of a new exhibit in the Earl Bane Gallery - "The Magic Web" with 40 rain forest photographs.

Gerald Cook announced this would be his last C&T meeting as Chamber President/CEO. He leaves that position November 10, and the new Chamber President/CEO, Dennis Lauver, begins on November 13. Gerald talked about the evolution of the Convention and Visitors program during his tenure at the Chamber. The committee wished him well.

**Next Meeting**

The next Convention & Tourism Advisory Committee Meeting will be held December 5 at the Chamber.

The meeting adjourned.